

Norbert Schemansky

(Continued from page 45)

that he was probably the 'lightest' heavy-weight on the platform.

His Style, Speed, and 'freedom of movement' were even in those days quite remarkable. In fact, El Saied Nosseir the famous Egyptian trainer was so impressed with him that he said to me: 'I would like Schemansky to be in my Team—I wish that he were an Egyptian.' This was high praise indeed, for 'El Saied' has produced some of the fastest and most stylish lifters in the world, and besides being a most experienced person—was himself a former Heavyweight World Champion and holder of Records in years gone by.

I myself have been associated with the Iron Game for nearly thirty years, and I was most impressed by Norberts 1948 performance. It seemed to be the beginning of a great w-l career, barring accidents, and since then I have studied his various National and International appearances with the greatest possible interest.

His Fast, clean-cut fluid style fascinated me . . . and he seemed to be developing greater and greater muscular 'Power' all the time, whereby his technique might be exploited with full effect.

When Heavyweight contests are in progress the onlooker invariably sees some very big men on the platform. They are not all *neat and powerful of physique*, like Davis and Schemansky. Some of the continental heavy-wts weigh anything up to 280 lbs. and their movements are somewhat ponderous. 'Power' they possess in plenty—but 'Speed' and 'Style' are all too often conspicuous by their absence.

But in these respects Schemansky is a phenomenal athlete for he has three attributes, which when combined, go to make the PERFECT Lifter, and bearing these things in mind I prepared to watch his athletic career unfold with the most pleasurable anticipation.

His appearance is quite arresting really, for he is taller than most competitors, being 5'11". He carries no superfluous tissue, and owns a very trim and hard waist-line. He is fair-haired, bespectacled, with a high sloping forehead. His movements are sudden sometimes, and those long rangy legs seem to be full of Power and Energy.

Although, as I have already stated, his physique displays all-round development . . . *his THIGHS are easily the most outstanding part of him.* They are literally packed with lean sinewy muscle and tendon all the way, and the thighs appear to be unusually thick and powerful at the point of insertion . . . just above the knee joint.

These limbs just ooze Speed and Power, typified by the easy manner in which he recovers from a really 'Deep Split' Snatch of 310 lbs. . . . or a 390 lb. 'Clean.' And only when one has had the opportunity of seeing these things take place repeatedly, does the onlooker finally realize the *immense reserves* of whiplike strength possessed by this athlete.

His personality is somewhat unusual according to my observations. I would describe him as a lively customer—in a quiet way, and not without a sense of humour at times.

His power of concentration is very intense when going into action on an international platform and dealing with record poundages . . . and there can be no doubt at all that this INTENSITY of purpose helps him tremendously in working up to a climax for his final objective.

At such times he is a fascinating study for

expert and laymen alike—and an object lesson to other lifters present.

At Milan in 1951 it so happened that 'Norb' failed with his first attempt Snatch of 280 lbs. in the newly-created 'Medium' hvy-wt division.

Before taking the same poundage once again, he spent the time almost completely enveloped in a huge blanket whilst he '*concentrated*' upon the task before him. When he was ready, the blanket was thrown off, those long powerful legs propelled him forward . . . and he ripped the bar aloft to score a perfect lift. This was followed three minutes later by another magnificent success with 292 lbs. The same evening he recorded three successful Clean & Jerks with 352-363-374 lbs.—the last poundage being a new World Record. Not content with this, he asked for 385 lbs. for an extra attempt outside the championships. His first try with this weight was a failure to 'Clean' by a narrow margin . . . *so once more the 'blanket' was brought out, and once more he spent a few minutes of precious 'meditation and mental concentration.'* This time he made a magnificent success, and he received a wonderful ovation from an appreciative audience.

His total was 942 lbs. that year and he weighed-in at exactly 198 lbs. . . . 7 lbs. 'lighter' than when he lifted in London in 1948.

This fact was interesting because it proved beyond doubt that he was developing into a greater state of *bodily efficiency*, and I began to wonder what would be in store for us at Finland the following year.

When the Finnish Olympiad took place it was obvious from some of the training sessions I witnessed beforehand that *this great American lifter was going to be in the 'form' of his life for the big event.*

When somewhat 'overweight' a few days earlier he had made a training Press of 300 lbs. . . . a Snatch of 310 lbs., and a Clean & Jerk of about 395 lbs. we were told.

Some idea of this lifters amazing Speed, Timing, Style and Muscular Power may be gauged when I tell you that I saw him 'Clean' 360 lbs. to the shoulders one day—*without moving his feet*, a tremendous achievement.

When the great day eventually arrived Norbert Schemansky made new weight-lifting History by creating three amazing World Records.

Weighing-in at a nicely judged 198 lbs., he Pressed 280 lbs., and went right through to Snatch 308 lbs. for a new Olympic and World Record.

The final Clean & Jerk saw him rip 390 lbs. overhead in a way that made the audience roar with delight. He afterwards made a very creditable effort to hoist 402 lbs.—but failed to complete the 'Clean'!

His 390 lb. Jerk and 979½ lb. Total were both Olympic and World Records, and I think it is quite safe to say that never has there been a lifter in the heavier class-weight divisions who could compare with him for dazzling speed and perfection of weight-lifting style. It was a valuable education just to watch this astonishing lifter, and I have the strong impression that he will Clean & Jerk 402 lbs. and record a 1,000 Total in this Class before he is finished.

FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

Norberts 'natural' body-weight varies between 212 and 217 lbs. and we must bear in mind that he may not always be content to 'reduce' to the 'Medium' 198 lb. limit as time goes on. In fact it is more than likely that he may try to improve upon the Heavyweight Snatch and 'Total' records, both of which stand in the name of John Davis at the time of writing this article. These levels will not

be easy to exceed by any means but Schemansky is a most amazingly scientific lifter and he possesses a blinding turn of speed for a big man as well as having the backing of tremendous Tendon Strength. He has colossal 'pulling' power and is the fortunate possessor of a pronounced elbow 'lock'.

With so many attributes in his favor the formidable task of exceeding the Record 1,063 lb. Total becomes at least a 'possibility' should he decide to stay in the Heavy-wt ranks for any length of time, and we should face this fact.

Already, at 212 lbs. body-weight this man has Pressed and Snatched 310 lbs., and we have the competent opinion of none other than John Davis, that these poundages do not represent Schemansky's *true* ability by any means.

For the benefit of students who like myself are interested in comparative body-weight possibilities it might not be out of place just here to point out that a Press of 319 lbs. . . . a Snatch of 330 lbs., and a Clean & Jerk of 420 lbs. would be sufficient to create a new all-time Record Heavy-wt Total.

Obviously, if a lifter has found it possible to Snatch 308 lbs. when weighing around the 198 lb. mark . . . the task of performing a 330 lb. Snatch does not present impossible obstacles *when a 15 or 20 lb. increase in body-weight with its additional muscular advantages is allowed for.*

I have been told from three sources that Schemansky's 412½ lb. Clean & Jerk was a most 'perfect' lift . . . the inference therefore is that 420 or even 425 lbs. might be possible in the near future, *especially if a little more body-wt were available.*

I am told that Norbert is a married man with a family . . . like many other w-l Champions, and this year he will be 29 years of age. He has to earn a living like the rest of us, and it is a great tribute to his character and will-power that he has persevered and triumphed with his training despite the setbacks and discouragements which are the common lot of the worker in his daily battle for life in this Cock-eyed old World.

I do not know how often he trains each week, but from what I have seen of him—he certainly trains very hard when in the gymnasium. He also appears to *enjoy* this conditioning work *and that is important.* He does not spare himself when putting the final touches to a World Championship preparation, and here again I noticed that much of his lifting was characterized by *considerable mental 'intensity' and drive* during training.

I must say that I greatly admire the inspiring 'team-work' which is always so much in evidence wherever the Americans happen to be.

If a lift happens to 'go wrong' . . . everyone gathers round, prepared to help with suggestions, criticisms, or in any way possible . . . and this spirit is good to see, for it gets things done, helps to solve problems, and provides 'inspiration'.

In spite of this strict attention to business when training is under-way, one or two laughs are usually provided. Some idea of the 'atmosphere' that prevails at these places may be gleaned from an incident which occurred at Milan in 1951.

It was known that the Russian Team were in training at Vienna, about 200 miles away . . . and everyone fervently hoped they would participate in the Championships . . . their 'arrival' was anticipated hourly.

During a 'training session' which was crowded with spectators the door was shaken vigorously by someone seeking admittance. When the portal was opened . . . two venerable old gentlemen made their entry, one was leaning heavily on a crutch, the other

glove. This fact makes his clean with the Apollon Wheels, a feat even more outstanding than Rigoulot's. Even more remarkable is the way in which Johnny cleaned the bar. . . . He used a reverse grip; a grip similar to that used when dead lifting heavy poundages. At the height of the pull and depth of split, he *let go the bar and caught it in the regular position*. This is a great feat of hand strength and I take my hat off to John.

My hands are much larger than either Rigoulot's or Johnny's, and I see no reason why I cannot use the regular grip in cleaning the Wheels. I seem to have a gift for hoisting thick handled barbells and dumbbells. . . . I *enjoy* lifting thick shafted bars. The first time I tried, I lifted the famous Louis Cyr dumbbell with my right hand. This dumbbell weighs approximately two hundred and thirty-five pounds and has a shaft as thick as the Apollon Wheels.

Now with regard to pressing the Wheels after I have cleaned them. . . . that is if I succeed in cleaning them. This phase of the lift presents not the slightest difficulty for me. I can press four hundred pounds from squat racks and have push pressed 450. I have pressed 365 pounds more times than I can recall in Olympic Style, a far more rigid style than a push-press.

Because of the rigidity of the Wheels. . . . due to the large diameter of the shaft, I will probably have to press the weight in loose style. Every lifter knows that an Olympic Bar possesses a certain amount of "spring" or "whip." This is in direct proportion to the amount of weight on the bar. The more weight, the greater the "whip." You have all heard Olympic Lifters refer to a bar as being "dead," meaning that it has little or no spring, which in turn, makes the bar that much more difficult to handle.

This is so in the case of the Apollon Wheels which are just so much dead weight. Three hundred and sixty-five pounds of "dead" weight at the shoulders is the equivalent of four hundred pounds on a good springy Olympic bar.

How do I intend to train for cleaning and pressing the Apollon Wheels? By using all types of forearm movements, and cleaning. As I said, the press section of the lift presents no difficulties. It is holding the bar during the clean, and the clean itself, that will determine success or failure for me. One exercise I'll use is holding as heavy a bar as possible in the hands, in the dead lift finish position until I am forced to put it down. I'll deliberately use thick bars in my training. . . . I got quite an idea from your recent hand and forearm specialization article. One hand dead lifts should also prove useful in addition to cleans from the hang. But the main thing is . . . *I can* and *I will* clean and press the Apollon Wheels, given the opportunity, and if readers of American Manhood, Muscle Power, and Muscle Builder will bear with me, I will prove my word is my bond. . . ."

EDITORS NOTE. We have already approached Professor Edmund Desbonnett with regard to securing a loan of the Apollon Wheels. If Monsieur Desbonnett is willing, the world Famous strength relic will be brought from France to America, and Doug will be able to train with it. At some future date, if present plans materialize, we intend to hold a gigantic Strength display at which Doug can prove to the world he can *clean and press the Apollon Wheels*.



You need the New, Improved Weider Vitamin-Mineral Food Supplement

Because.

IT GIVES YOU ALL THIS . . .

- Vitamin A—For eyesight, complexion health.
- Vitamin B—For tissue growth, sound digestion, strong nerves, training energy.
- Vitamin C—for healthy gums, skin tone, better circulation.
- Vitamin D—for strong, sturdy bones.
- Vitamin B¹²—For rich blood, amazing tissue growth factor.
- Folic Acid—For combating anemia, assuring maximum growth results from Vitamin B¹².
- PLUS—EVERY KNOWN mineral of proved medical and good health value included in sufficient quantities to assure a complete daily supply when taken as directed—just 3 handy tablets a day!



YES—now YOU can say goodbye to bodybuilding FAILURE, lack of energy, low resistance to disease and poor digestion due to dietary deficiency. AT LAST: working in cooperation with a U. S. Government Approved Pharmaceutical Laboratory, Weider is proud to present the NEW and IMPROVED Weider Vitamin-Mineral Food Supplement, GUARANTEED the best that money can buy, or it WON'T COST YOU A CENT!

ASK YOUR DOCTOR—Today's foods do NOT always supply the vitamins and minerals you need daily. Even a SMALL deficiency can hold back bodybuilding gains, rob you of energy, undermine your health. So BE SURE . . . get more training drive, better health—all you need is 3 handy tablets a day.

GOOD for every member of the family! Every underweight, sickly, anemic, run-down member of your family can benefit from Weider Vitamin-Mineral Supplements too! EVERYONE gets more pep, energy, solid JOY OF LIVING, this handy, Medically Approved way.

ORDER NOW

month's supply is a low \$3.50
GIANT family size only \$9.00.
Here's one investment in your good health and training success you can't afford to pass up. RUSH in order . . . use convenient coupon.

Save 50% over general retail prices



USE THIS HANDY COUPON

Act Now . . . take only 3 tablets daily. Train with the Weider System 3 times a week. That's all you have to do for good health, fast muscle building . . . I

**WEIDER FOOD
SUPPLEMENTS**
Dept. M.P.
16 Hopkins Ave.,
Jersey City, N. J.

Canadian Address:
WEIDER FOOD SUPPLEMENTS
4466 Colonial Ave.
Montreal, Que., Canada.

Gentlemen:
I want the NEW AND IMPROVED Weider Vitamin-Mineral Food Supplement. Please send me the following, for which I enclose full remittance. (Check One) One Month's Supply for \$3.50. Giant Family Package for \$9.00. I understand that this is GUARANTEED 100% medically approved and the best that money can buy or I can return for a refund.

Name
Address
City Zone State
(No COD's. Postal charges extra. All orders shipped promptly)